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many delusions which will never grow into truths,) yet seems to describe, happily enough, many of those disastrous or dilatory attempts at amelioration, which society is in the habit of making from age to age.

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ART. IV. — *Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the State, Discipline, Studies, and Revenues of the University and Colleges of Oxford; together with the Evidence and an Appendix* Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty. London. 1852. Folio, pp. 260 and 387.

LATE in the Parliamentary session of 1850, the last Liberal Administration in England, including, under Lord John Russell as Premier, many of the statesmen who have now succeeded to the vacant seats of the ultra-conservatives, announced their intention of issuing a Commission from the Queen for inquiry into the State, Discipline, Studies, and Revenues of the English Universities. In the following August, the proper forms were sent out, appointing for investigation at Oxford, "Samuel, Bishop of Norwich, Archibald Campbell Tait, Francis Jeune, Henry George Liddell, John Lucius Dampier, Baden Powell, and George Henry Sacheverell Johnson, Commissioners,—with Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, as Secretary." The Bishop of Norwich, Dr. Hinds, was, for some time, Vice-Principal, under Dr. Whately, then Principal, of Alban Hall at Oxford; and in this capacity was actively engaged, twenty or twenty-five years ago, in carrying on the education of the place. Dr. Tait was for several years a College Tutor of high repute at a college of the highest repute, Balliol. He succeeded Dr. Arnold as Head Master of Rugby School, in the year 1844, and after a service of, we believe, six years, retired to the Deanery of Carlisle. Mr. Liddell, in like manner, after distinguishing himself as Tutor at Christ Church, undertook the charge, which he still holds, of the Head Mastership of Westminster School; he is best known, however, out of his own country, as the joint author

of the excellent Greek Lexicon, largely used in America, and almost to the exclusion of every other in England. Dr. Jeune, at one time Master of King Edward's School at Birmingham, is one of the ablest of the Oxford Heads of Colleges; he is Master of Pembroke, an institution famous for the name of Dr. Johnson, who belonged to it, but, under the present management, likely to obtain other celebrity. Mr. Dampier is not, we believe, immediately connected with Oxford; he acted, we presume, in a great measure, as a legal adviser. Mr. Baden Powell, Professor of Geometry, a connection of Dr. Whately's, graduated, we find, in the year 1817; has been a constant resident, and, in some sense, a leader of the liberal party, at Oxford. Mr. Johnson, known for combining, in his academical success, more classical and mathematical honors than ever before, or we believe, since, have been united, has been for many years Tutor of Queen's. Mr. Stanley, in like manner, for several years, was the leading Tutor at University College, his wider reputation, meantime, resting upon his Biography of the late Dr. Arnold.

These gentlemen,—certainly well qualified for their task, chosen, with the exception of the legal member, from Oxford's most distinguished graduates between the years 1815 and 1837, representing, severally, the Professors, the Heads of Colleges, and the Tutors,—after laborious investigations, extending over a space of nearly two years, and marked by eighty-seven meetings, presented their Report, in April last, to Her Majesty; by whose command (such is the English formality) it was printed and presented to both Houses of Parliament before the close of their session of 1852. It contains in all 770 folio pages, or about 400 of evidence, and 300 of the Report itself, which concludes with a series of forty-seven recommendations of reform.

Were we to ask an ordinary, well-informed Englishman, what the English Universities, practically speaking, are, the answers, however varying in tone or in details, would probably be to the effect, that boys who are meant to be clergymen in the Established Church, gentlemen's sons in general, and many young noblemen go to them; they go to *college* there, after leaving the *public schools*.

The first part of this explanation it is not difficult to understand, nor indeed to realize it to our imaginations, even amidst American circumstances. It is not, of course, to be forgotten, that, in England, profession, education, and social standing are, to a very great extent, hereditary; the liberal professions are fed from the sons of their own members, and from the educated, wealthy, or *gentlemanly* classes in general. The son of the artisan, the shopkeeper, the peasant, and the poor man has but a very small prospect of passing into that other and higher sphere. The schools naturally accessible to him are not such as to open to him any avenues of distinction; they do not prepare him for the Universities; the Universities themselves offer no kind of facilities for his admission. These are for "him that hath"—for those that can pay for them.

Still, it is not difficult to form a conception of such a finishing school for the sons of the more fortunate. The University of Oxford may be correctly understood as an institution of the kind, containing, in the condition of undergraduate students, about 1500 young men, who enter it usually about the age of nineteen, and leave it at twenty-two. To go into the Church, that is, to take orders and become clergymen in the Establishment, it is almost necessary to obtain a Bachelor's degree, either here or at Cambridge. Two petty village colleges, (St. Bees and Lampeter,) founded for the supply of clergymen to the distant and ill-endowed parishes of Wales and the northern counties, constitute an insignificant exception. Nor is the new University of Durham as yet a formidable rival in the monopoly. The vast majority, therefore, of the future parochial ministers are educated at one of the two ancient Universities. This fact is of some importance, conducing, as it does, on the one hand, indeed, to a less narrow and professional temper in the Established clergy, but on the other, to give a theological and sectarian bias to general University studies. To their title of finishing schools for the upper classes, Cambridge, and still more, Oxford, must add that of seminaries for clergy in the Established church. No similar *necessity* exists in the case of any other learned profession. Any man may become Judge or Lord Chancellor,

as did Lord Truro recently, without any connection with any university. The number of terms to be kept by the law-student at the Inns of Court in London, is reduced upon his showing a certificate of education at Oxford or Cambridge; and the time needed before a call to the bar, thus abridged. Yet such a bonus, so purchased, can hardly be considered a great inducement to the eager legal aspirant. Nevertheless, a very great number of the English lawyers will be found to have been either at Oxford or Cambridge; the latter, in particular, has been famous for contributing Judges and Chancellors; and for the bar, quite as distinctly as for the Church, such an education is considered a natural preliminary.

Comparatively few of those destined for the medical profession are allowed these three previous years, before devoting themselves to their proper professional studies. Oxford and Cambridge seldom send their alumni to the attorney's or the merchant's office. Young men going into business have, indeed, but little occasion, and perhaps still less time, for this last culture. Great London bankers, however, and eminent solicitors, do not unfrequently send their future successors to seek the advantage of it. Young men will come up to College while waiting for a commission; but into the naval service, boys enter too early to permit of it; and most of those also who go into the army, get what teaching they do get, elsewhere; as is the case, too, almost universally, with such as go to India.

For only two professions, perhaps, can it be said that Oxford and Cambridge offer, as at present conducted, suitable preliminary instruction. To only one of the two, perhaps, is that instruction professionally necessary. But they are eagerly attended by a large number of young men not destined for any profession whatever—eldest sons of country gentlemen and noblemen, of fortunate merchants, and of wealthy parents in general; heirs, in whatever way or kind, to affluence, who look forward, if to any thing more than ease and enjoyment, to *public* business, to Parliament and politics; or even, if to ease and enjoyment chiefly, yet desire to mix as equals in the society of their equals, and not to be disqualified for something beyond. Foreign travel and private tuition, an early

commission in the army, or early service in one of the public offices, might perhaps be as useful for such ulterior ends as the Latin and Greek, or mathematics of the Colleges. Yet, as an actual habit, a large proportion of future country squires and noblemen, of prospective members of Parliament and statesmen, do still frequent the old seats of old learning. In the list of any English government, there are sure to be numerous names that come from the Universities. Two out of the thirteen present Cabinet Ministers are men who attained the rare success of the highest academical honors at Oxford. The late Sir Robert Peel, in the year 1808, was the first example of the "Double-First;" Mr. Gladstone and Sir Charles Wood, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and President of the Board of Control, followed in those eminent footsteps; and Mr. Cardwell, President of the Board of Trade, was also similarly distinguished. For such future positions, something, it would seem, is, or is supposed to be there taught, in the way of general higher culture, which could not be generally dispensed with. Young clergymen, young lawyers, and young gentlemen at large,—such is a fair account of the Oxford 1500. Some of them will be bishops, judges, and statesmen. The great mass will be either clergymen tending parishes or keeping schools, or barristers. A very considerable number, however, will be landed or funded private gentlemen; and a good many, one way or another, will find their way to the direct service of the state. And young lawyers, perhaps young clergymen, and young gentlemen at large, would be the fair account, with the slight contrast only of a change in order, of the somewhat more numerous body at Cambridge.

At both places, Latin and Greek and mathematics are the intellectual aliments, the studies, and the discipline provided. Cambridge has stimulated mathematical exercises; Oxford has preferred Greek and Latin reading. Cambridge, in her classical studies, has paid more especial attention to Grammar, Philology and Language; Oxford, to History, and, generally, to the contents of the ancient works, adding to her mere Greek and Latin, moreover, some little Logic and Mental Philosophy; and, more carefully far than Cambridge, inculcating on all

her members something of the letter, and a good deal of the spirit, of Church-of-England Theology.

Three years, between leaving school and entering active, or, at any rate, actual, life, to be spent in studies such as these — (the period falling, as at present arranged, almost always between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two,) — this is the ordinary scholastic idea of college life. After passing, it may be, six or seven years at one of the great public boarding-schools, such as Eton, Harrow, Rugby, or Winchester, the cost of attending which is not less than 500 dollars a year, learning there, for the most part, Greek and Latin, a boy, at the age of eighteen or nineteen, will be sent to Oxford or Cambridge. At one of the Colleges there, his name has been put down for admission, perhaps two years before. He goes up now for this admission, is examined by the College Tutors, and matriculated by the University authorities. Or his admission may be, if he is a boy of ability, attended by competition, in a severe examination both in writing and *viva voce*, for a College Scholarship, if successful in obtaining which, he finds himself possessed of a little temporary income, varying from 150 dollars to 400 dollars, or even 500 dollars a year. In any case, he “goes down,” and returns, after a few months’ interval, to commence his college life. He is settled in college rooms, attends college chapel, dines in college hall, and attends college lectures or recitations, to the amount, as has been said, of about two hours a day. An over ambitious student will at once bethink himself of trying for one of the University Scholarships, awarded for proficiency in Greek and Latin, especially in translation from English into Greek and Latin prose and verse. An English verse and a Latin verse prize composition, recited at the annual commemoration, or commencement, are also to be contended for. Instruction and discipline for these objects — that is, for the Scholarship and the Latin verse prize — are usually obtained from a private tutor. College lectures continue; and in the third year, begin, perhaps, to be of real service. Any of the better Colleges are pretty sure to furnish tolerable assistance in the Ethics of Aristotle, one of the indispensable subjects for a degree with honors. And for the final examination, which bestows that degree and those honors, he will now have seriously to

prepare. A "First Class" is, for the most forward student, one good year's hard work.\* The mere act of memory required, is, in itself, a very considerable effort. Success, in a "first class," is accompanied by a hope of obtaining, in some one or other of the nineteen Oxford Colleges, a Fellowship — a benefice, that is, worth, on the average, 1000 dollars per annum,—tenable under conditions which we shall allude to further on, (one is celibacy,) usually held for a space of perhaps six or seven years, leading, however, to College Tutorships, the average salary of which may be 1500 dollars; and, if the holder go into orders, ultimately, though perhaps after many years, providing him with a College living; possibly, also, conducting him to the position of Head of his College, and member of the Board which administers the government of the University.

Such is the scholastic idea of University life. Three years are to be spent in studies, the subjects of which are dictated peremptorily by an examination which must be passed at the end; but their pursuit, in the mean time, is left a good deal to the option and free-will of the individual student; as, indeed, can hardly fail to be the case, where the student is of an age so near upon positive legal manhood. At Cambridge, the whole thing is more avowedly abandoned by the authorities, and left completely to the choice of the pupil and the private tutor. At Oxford, the system of public tuition has a considerable apparent validity; the undergraduate is called upon to attend lectures (recitations,) perhaps for two hours a day, during the whole of his time; he has exercises given him to do, is reprimanded for neglect, and at any rate, by systematic non-attendance, would be certain to incur a dismissal. Yet at Oxford, also, though hampered a good deal by the regulations of the system of public tuition, the pupil is, in the more important points, as at Cambridge, left

\* Twelve, thirteen, or fourteen *books*, their matter as well as language, usually constitute the *brief* for a First Class in (Classics, or) *Literæ Humaniores* — e. g. Aristotle's Ethics, Rhetoric, or Politics; Plato's Republic, or three shorter Dialogues; Butler's Analogy, or Sermons; Herodotus, Thucydides, ten Books of Livy; Tacitus' Annals or Histories; Æschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Virgil, Horace, Juvenal. The examination occupies five days for *paper-work*; and gives each student an hour and a half of *viva voce*.



largely to the exercise of his own discretion. The real restrictions and the real incitements are the public examinations, which he must pass to obtain his degree of B. A. The only real compulsion to study is fear of failure in this point; the great and working stimulus, the hope of distinction at this crisis. In the main, therefore, we may call it, at both places, a voluntary system of study, regulated by public examinations and stimulated by distinctions therein conferred. It differs, for example, from the system of Harvard College, on the one hand, by not so rigidly pressing to exact attention to study, or to give a course of public instruction sufficient in itself. It rather says to the student,—at a certain time, you must be able to do this, and do that; construe so much Greek and Latin; solve such and such mathematical problems, &c. In what way you are to qualify yourself for this trial, is pretty much your own affair. If the public tutors do not provide you with what you want, it is not their fault; you are not to complain; it is your business to find what you want elsewhere. It differs, on the other hand, equally, from the system pursued in the other universities of Europe, in the restrictions to the freedom of study imposed by the terms of the examinations, and in the stimulus provided by the honors bestowed in them. It does not say, attend, at your pleasure, the oral deliveries of this or that distinguished philologist, historian, theologian, or jurist, and take your own method of profiting by what you hear from him;—learn in what way you please, and to what amount you please. By the strict law of the final examination, the English system endeavors to exact a certain amount, to stimulate a high amount; to dictate certain subjects, and indicate certain methods.

Examinations for the Bachelor's degree, the examinations for the Pass and the Class, that is, for the mere degree and for honors,—such, during the last fifty years, have been the practically significant phases of English University life. If we open any Calendar—that of the Oxford, the Cambridge, the London, or the Durham University—we shall at once see that this is the cardinal fact of their system. The whole mass of the 1500 Oxford students, for example, are seen, as the head of the column approaches the exit from college

life, to separate into a larger and a smaller body — the latter moving aside to essay the more difficult and dangerous passage of honor; the former contented with the easy and unambitious road straight before them. And the Calendars under each successive year record, in the order of distinction, the names of the successful candidates for honors, giving, (at Oxford,) merely the aggregate number of the Passmen. For example —

“EXAMINATION OF MICHAELMAS TERM, 1831.

*In Literis Humanioribus* (Classics, with Divinity.)    *In Disciplinis Math. et Phys.* (Mathematics.)

CLASSIS I.

Baugh, Folliot, Exeter College.  
Cornish, Charles L., Exeter College.  
Denison, Henry, Christ Church.  
Gladstone, William E., Christ Church.  
Payne, Peter S. H., Balliol.

CLASSIS I.

Denison, Henry, Christ Church.  
Gladstone, William E., Christ Church.  
Jeffreys, Henry A., Christ Church.  
Prideaux, Charles G., Balliol.  
Robertson, James, Pembroke.

CLASSIS II.

Ten names, in similar *alphabetical* order.

CLASSIS II.

One name.

CLASSIS III.

Fifteen names, also in *alphabetical* order.

CLASSIS III.

On this occasion, no name.

CLASSIS IV.

Seventeen names, as before.

CLASSIS IV.

Three names.

CLASSIS V. *a.*

LXXIII.

(that is to say, seventy-three candidates were admitted, without any honor, to the simple B. A. degree.”)

Of these examinations, there are, at Oxford, two every year. To appear in the First Class of the classical division, is the usual ambition of a student of ability. To appear in both first classes — to obtain, that is, a “Double-First,” — is a distinction comparatively rare, and not very frequently attempted.

This system was first introduced into Oxford in the year 1800. It has been very energetically carried out; continual improvements have been effected, and very important changes, the result of which has hardly yet become visible, were introduced by a statute of the year 1850. A sufficient idea of the system is, however, obtained by the example given above.

“The general effect of the change,” says the Oxford Report, “has been exceedingly beneficial. Industry has been greatly increased. . . . The requirements of the examinations for an ordinary degree, slight though they be, have yet a great effect on that period of the academical course which immediately precedes them. The idlest and most careless student is checked in his career of idleness by the approach of his examination. The severity of the final examination may be judged of, by comparing the number of those rejected at Oxford with the number of those rejected in other universities. It appears, from a return made to the House of Commons, that, on an average of the same four years, the number who presented themselves for examination, and of those who passed, were respectively, at Dublin, 259 and 242; at Cambridge, 370 and 342; at Oxford, 387 and 287. The stimulus of the examination for honors is found to be very strong. The average number of candidates for honors in Classics is not less than ninety, out of nearly five hundred candidates for a degree. Of these ninety, about ten obtain a First Class. This honor, then, is no mean distinction. That it has been honestly and deservedly awarded, is proved by the confidence which the examiners, for the most part, enjoy, and the success, in after life, of those who have won it.”

At Oxford, it may be true to say that rejection is more severely enforced; at Cambridge, meantime, honors are more severely contested. The trifling difference, that the successful candidates at Oxford are arranged in their several classes alphabetically,—all, in each class, being presumed to have equally satisfied a particular standard—has always been supposed to mark a great diversity from the system of Cambridge, in which every individual name, even of the Passmen, is placed in a personal scale of merit. That intense personal competition for the first post—that *race* for the senior wranglership, or head of the Classical Tripos, is, with all its merits and demerits, a thing comparatively unknown at Oxford, and certainly alien to the genius of the place.

Side by side with the scholastic idea of university life, we must not fail to place another, which, in the actual result, is represented quite as largely. A young man of nineteen, to say the truth, does not go to Oxford altogether to study; his parents do not always send him there for that purpose; and his tutors, more or less, recognize some other views and objects for him. Certainly, to attend college lectures and chapels; to

prepare, during three years, for an examination in Latin and Greek or Mathematics; to obtain the Bachelor's gown, or a conspicuous place in the class list, do not constitute, for the great majority, the idea of college life, — do not, perhaps, comprehend the whole real and substantive good to be derived by the most faithful student from his stay in the university, — but assuredly are ends quite remote from those incidental and accessory benefits which are most present to the views and feelings of the young men in general. Those, at any rate, whose future maintenance in life is secured to them independent of any profession, — those, also, in all probability a very numerous class, who do not see immediately before their eyes, in any very tangible form, the future cruel necessity of work for bread, — will be more inclined to believe their true business at college to consist in the enjoyment, and what we may call also the improvement, of social opportunities; the formation of acquaintance, the cultivation of friendships, the study of other minds and different opinions, the experience of something like manly life, the acquisition of something analogous to knowledge of the world. The prospect of a free and yet well regulated intercourse with so large a number of the *élite* of their generation, added to the general *prestige* of the place, is quite enough in itself to attract to an English University a host of idlers and saunterers, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of knowledge, young men of small attainments and smaller aspirations, to whom the severer work of the place is wholly indifferent, and who are only too likely to pervert or exaggerate its amusements. If we presuppose a solid substratum of study, it may be admitted that pupils do as much for each other as their teachers do for them. Manly amusements and exercises, and daily intellectual and moral contact with each other, where young men have something more to do than play, are, indeed, it may be, the real building, and recitations and lectures and examinations the mere scaffolding; but assuredly, at the age of nineteen or twenty, without a considerable strength of scaffolding, the masonry above is not likely to be secure. The most that can be said, is, that in the adjustment of the scholastic regulations, fair play should be allowed to these unscholastic and more spontaneous developments.

A conflux of ill-instructed and half-prepared students is an evil to which universities in general are liable. Oxford, however, has a special disadvantage in being so much the resort of sons of the wealthier—that is, the idler, classes. And, hitherto, she has not done what she reasonably might, by insisting on a certain standard, to be, of necessity, attained by all who enter her precinct. On the whole, admission may be said to be granted to all who are prepared to incur the expense of residence. All whom the Colleges choose to receive within their walls—boys coming up, not from the highest class only, but from some class far below the highest at a public school—may alike enter at her gates, without any question of their proficiency, provided they are admitted at one of the Colleges. And “the fact is notorious,” says Archbishop Whately, “that men do obtain admission, (at one College, if refused by another,) who are quite unprepared to profit by what ought to be an academical education.” At the beginning of the second year, only, according to the system before the last alterations, a trifling University investigation is made into the attainments of its members; and some “idle apprentices” have been known to retire precipitately before this ceremony of *Responsions*, unable or unwilling to encounter the labor and difficulty of some plain Greek and Latin construing, translation of English into Latin prose, and a little Euclid or Logic. A ceremony, we call it, because of the trifling amount of work required; though, so far as it goes, it is undoubtedly a real and proper examination. But with this exception, the University does not trouble herself as to the intellectual condition of her members, during the time of their residence; she reserves her strength for the examination at its close. Admission, as was said, is a matter left to the pleasure of the Colleges.

And what are the *Colleges*? Is not going to College equivalent to going to the University? Are not College and University convertible terms? If not, what is the difference, and why is the one so often confused with the other? This question comes at last inevitably before us. The public schools prepare young men for the Universities; at the close of their residence, they receive their degrees after an University exami-

nation ; but their life at the University, their admission to it, and their fortunes after receiving its degree, are all, in the most intimate and intricate manner, bound up with the *Colleges*.

To make the whole subject clear, let us begin at the beginning. Any institution, which grants degrees, may claim the title of an University. The new University of London, for example, merely *examines*, and grants degrees. It has Examiners, receiving salaries, and is controlled by a Senate, or governing body. But it does not teach ; it has no professors, tutors, or teachers, of any kind. Only a registrar and some clerks are permanently on duty there. Affiliated to it, indeed, there exist a variety of collegiate institutions, some in England, some in Ireland — the two most important in London itself ; and candidates who have been taught, and have resided a stated time at these schools or Colleges, receive from the University of London, after examination, with or without honors, its degrees in arts, laws, and medicine. Such are the powers by royal charter intrusted to it.

Examinations, however, do not appear to be essential to the idea of an University. Nowhere, perhaps, is a degree conferred without some pretence of an exercise, or reality of a fee ; the latter, perhaps, is everywhere *de rigueur* ; but examinations, in any strict sense of the term, are characteristic of English Universities. Those on the continent of Europe, and in Scotland, do, indeed, grant degrees, but are famous rather for their Professors ; the distinguished men who deliver lectures appear much rather to be their essential element, than any exercise exacted or any degree conferred ; Professors lecturing, and students attending — these two facts would, for the common notion of the thing, appear to be sufficient.

Wherever the University has undertaken the duty of teaching, wherever professors have drawn to their classes any considerable numbers, it is natural, desirable, and almost inevitable, that a race of subordinate, assistant instructors should spring up under their shadow. It is possible, of course, for the same individuals to perform both the functions of the professor proper, who delivers lectures, and those of the cate-

chetical instructor, who questions, corrects, and explains in detail. But in general, private teachers, teachers of smaller classes, teachers of single pupils, tutors, *répétiteurs*, or the like, are found to come forward as auxiliaries whenever the size of the professor's class withdraws the individual student from his more direct agency.

Thus far, we are concerned with *studies*. But, to pursue these studies, to attend professors and tutors, residence in their neighborhood is, of course, required. To obtain a degree, also, a certain amount of attendance, a certain length of residence, is usually exacted. A body of young men, residing away from their homes, is pretty sure to need, both in and out of the classes, some considerable superintendence. Vice-Chancellors and Proctors at Oxford, and English Cambridge, the President and the Proctors at American Cambridge, are examples of University system for *discipline*.

With a further view to their comfort and their good behavior, parents will be anxious to place their sons under the more immediate and continual care of academical functionaries. Professors will be asked to receive young men into their houses. Boarding-houses, or Halls, will come into existence, and residence in them will be more or less recognized, recommended, or even insisted upon, by the regulations of each particular University.

Another very natural step will be the provision of maintenance for poorer students, while attending classes, and preparing for, or, it may be, continuing their studies after, their degree. The Professorships we presume to be endowed, or paid by fees, or partly the one, partly the other; what we here mean, are not payments made for instruction, but subsidies for study; assistance, gratuitously given, to promising students. Of course, moreover, every University has its system of government, its constitution in itself, and its relation to the state. Into this curious subject we shall not now enter. Let us return to our Oxford Colleges.

Upon the original idea of an University, as an institution granting degrees, we have accumulated, stratum after stratum, 1. Examinations; 2. Professors; 3. Private Tutors or *Répétiteurs*; 4. Officers for Discipline; 5. Boarding-houses or

Halls, for residence; 6. Subsidies for students; 7. Government. The *Colleges* at Oxford and Cambridge are properly a combination of five or six endowed boarding-houses, kept by subsidized graduate students; but they exercise, at present, duties under all the figures. They were originally founded as eleemosynary residences for poor students, both before and after their degree. (And students, it must be remembered, in the Middle Ages, were mostly poor; the young barons and squires were bred up, not to book-learning and grammar, but to the nobler exercises of arms.) They were to be admitted at an early age, in mere boyhood, but were to continue their studies, in receipt of a fixed maintenance, if they pleased, to the end of their lives. For these purposes, lands were left to them, buildings erected for them, statutes for their government carefully drawn up, and an official Visitor appointed for their superintendence. They were, in fact, a sort of monasteries of learning; and the passion for founding them appears to have prevailed just when the passion for founding mere monasteries proper, for religious purposes, began, towards the early dawn of the Reformation, to pass away. Wolsey destroyed religious houses to found and enrich his new house of learning — quite in the spirit of the age — more truly so than his king, who destroyed them for the benefit of his exchequer. As learning assumed the place of religion, and as the mere religious *Hospitia* passed away, the learned *Hospitia* grew in importance. The later Colleges — Magdalen, New College, Corpus Christi, and Christ Church — rise on a far more magnificent scale; and now, gradually, they assume the duties not only of supporting poor scholars, but of superintending and offering residence to young students in general. *Fellows*, or older students; *Scholars*, or younger students; both alike belong to the foundation, and receive a maintenance from the College lands. But, together with these, we now begin to find *Commoners*, that is, unattached younger students, living together with the *Scholars* under the superintendence of the Fellows. The eleemosynary houses for poor students have become recognized as residences for students in general; and the Senior poor students, under the name of Fellows, have undertaken the charge of



their studies. Nay, more; in some of these later establishments, public lectureships are created for the benefit of the University; Fellows of Corpus and of Magdalen are to exercise the functions of University teachers. University Professorships are founded in connection with these eleemosynary halls.

“Cardinal College,” says the Report, “seems to have been designed by Wolsey to comprehend almost all that had hitherto been aimed at by such Foundations. It was to provide for the indigent; for an almshouse was attached to it. It was to be a Chapter, and to have a Church and Service more stately than New College, or than that of any Cathedral; for in it were to be sixty great, and forty lesser, Canons. It was to be a House of Learning; for these Canons were all to be Students, and one hundred Scholars besides were to be supported. It was to have Public Lecturers like Magdalen and Corpus; and, through its Professors, was to become almost an University in itself, dispensing instruction to the University at large.

“Thus, then, step by step, was the idea of a College formed, till all its capacities were fully developed in the grand design of Wolsey, of which Christ Church, noble as it is, is but a reduced copy.”

We must not follow the curious history given in the Blue Book too closely. But the important thing to observe, is, that these magnificent houses of learning, these endowed halls, with their beneficed students, gradually absorbed all the functions of the University. It was enacted, before long, that all students should be compelled to reside in one or other of them; no student, since that time, except by extraordinary indulgence, has kept his terms in lodgings of his own. The executive powers of government in the University, were thrown into the hands of a Board, consisting of the Heads, (Masters, Presidents, Wardens, &c.,) of the Colleges. The Heads of the Colleges, hold, in turn, the office of Vice-Chancellors; and the Fellows of the several Colleges, according to a fixed cycle, appoint, from their body, the Proctors. And, finally, the students of the University are, in their several Colleges, placed by the University under the charge of College tutors.

The condition of the Oxford student, under this *régime*, during the last century, is well represented in Gibbon's account of his own residence, as a gentleman-commoner, at

Magdalen. In the absence of all necessity for instruction, (the degree, at that time being conferred after a mere ceremonial of exercises,) the Tutor only gave a general supervision, a little advice, a little assistance, much as he and the pupil felt disposed. But when, with the commencement of the present century, the new Examination statute exacted a certain positive amount of Latin and Greek, Logic and Divinity, from all candidates for the B. A., the College tutors displayed a laudable access of zeal and diligence; and since that, the whole public tuition of the University has been in their hands. The undergraduates are wholly in their charge; lectures which they give, claim precedence before those of any professor; the great majority of professors, moreover, are concerned with subjects that have no place among the items required for the degree, and are therefore excluded from all participation in the ordinary course of instruction. In the hands of the Fellows of Colleges, as University tutors, and of the Heads of Colleges, as University governors; and conjointly in their hands as the managers of the University residences in which all students are bound to live, and as dispensers, moreover, of an immense and honorable patronage, (their own vacant Scholarships and Fellowships,) the whole University system may be said to have this long time lain. The only real rivals of the College tutors have been the private teachers. The only check on the good pleasure of the Hebdomadal Board of Heads of Houses, lies in the Convocation, or general assembly, of Masters of Arts, a legislative body without power of initiating measures. And as managers of residences, and dispensers of patronage, the Heads and Fellows have had no check whatever but some competition amongst themselves, and some faintly-heard echoes of a distant public opinion.

Is it desirable that these important functions should be thus exercised? How, for example, we must ask, *in limine*, are these Public Tutors and University magistrates chosen?

The Heads of the Colleges are chosen by the Fellows, from their own number, in some cases, the choice extending to ex-Fellows; in one instance, Christ Church, the Crown appoints. The Tutors of the college are selected from among the Fellows, by their Head. And the Fellows,—are they

chosen by general competition among distinguished students, upon the test of a severe examination? Listen to Mr. Temple's evidence, selected for special citation by the Oxford Commissioners.

"There are, in Oxford, 542 Fellowships. . . . Out of this number, only twenty-two are in such a sense open, that a young man, on first coming up, sees his way clear towards them with no other bar than may arise from his own want of talents or diligence. The rest are almost all restricted to

1. Persons born in particular localities.
2. Founders' kin.
3. Persons educated in particular schools.

The only Fellowships not so restricted, are ten at Balliol; twelve at Oriel; and sixty-one at Christ Church; and the latter are practically close, being in the gift of the Canons, in rotation, who treat them very much as private property."

The Fellows, with this small exception, are chosen, in accordance, for the most part, with the express directions of the Founders, from young men born, for example, in Lincolnshire, or, it may be, Rutlandshire; from young men brought up at Winchester School; or from young men descended, e. g., from the kindred of Archbishop Chicheley, who, in the reign of Henry V., founded All-Souls College. The future public tutor and University governor, is selected, not because of any fitness or capacity beyond others, but for one of the above reasons. A, the able and distinguished scholar, must be rejected to make room for B, born in Berkshire, or C, who was a dull boy at an indifferent school, or D, who has got a pedigree. There are, moreover, other restrictions. In some cases, the Fellows must have been previously scholars of the College; in many, indigence is, by statute, required as an essential; the great majority are compelled, after the lapse, at the utmost, of six years, to take orders, and become clergymen of the Establishment. In all cases, the Fellow is bound to celibacy; by marriage he forfeits his Fellowship: this restriction the Heads alone are free from.

"The effect," says Mr. Temple, whose words are, as before, adopted by the Commission, "is most mischievous. Men who are naturally well fitted to be country clergymen, are bribed, because they are born in some parish in Rutland, to remain in Oxford as Fellows, until they are not only unfit for that, but for every thing else. The interests of

learning are intrusted to those who have neither talents nor inclination for the subject. The Fellowships are looked upon, and used, as mere stepping-stones to a living. A large number of the Fellows live away from the place, and thus, in reality, convert the emoluments to a purpose quite alien from that for which they were intended. On the other hand, the undergraduates suffer a double loss; first, in being deprived of the legitimate stimulus to study; and secondly, in having their instruction intrusted to an inferior body of men."

Evidence to the same effect, expressly declaring this to be the crying evil in the present condition of Oxford, might be multiplied to an indefinite extent from these pages. And that the Commissioners have set themselves in most especial earnest, to the remedy of these, and the like abuses, will be evident from the following extracts from their final recommendations.

With the view of removing the government of the University from the exclusive control of the Heads of Colleges, they propose to create a new Board, in which, with the Heads of Houses, shall sit all Professors, and public Lecturers, together with the senior Tutors of all Colleges and Halls.

To destroy the exclusive rights possessed by the Colleges, as residences, they recommend "That the provision of the statutes, by which all members of the University are obliged to belong to some College, or Hall, . . . should be annulled; and that liberty be given for the extension of the University, as well by the foundation of Halls, as by permitting members of the University, under due superintendence, to live in private lodgings, without connection with a College or Hall."

This last recommendation is, we believe, the only one which has met with any thing like general disapprobation at Oxford. Yet it is backed by the support of several eminent Tutors and Professors. It is a very great change; but, we believe, it is the only means of reducing, materially, the expense of University residence. The new "Tutors' Association," in Oxford, declines, we find by the recent newspapers, to sanction this plan; they are eager, meantime, for the institution of *Halls* of various kinds, even independent of the existing Colleges.

The Commissioners further advise, —

"That all oaths imposed by College statutes, and all declarations against change in statutes, should be *prohibited as unlawful*.

“That all Fellowships should be thrown open to all members of the University, wherever born, provided they have taken the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and can produce a proper certificate of character...

“That persons elected to Fellowships should be released from all restrictions on the tenure of their Fellowships, arising from the obligation to enter into holy orders.... That it would be expedient to modify, rather than remove, the restriction arising from the possession of property; and that celibacy should still continue to be a necessary condition for holding Fellowships, with certain specified exceptions.” [This is with a view to ensure some rapidity of succession; the Fellows cannot all be College Tutors; in many cases, Fellowships are mere subsidies to young men reading for the bar, or otherwise engaged in study; and it is, of course, desirable that such benefices should change hands.]

“That all Scholarships should be thrown open to your Majesty’s subjects under the age of nineteen, of whatever lineage or birthplace...

“That college revenues should be made, to a certain extent, available for the education of the University. That, for this purpose, the Lectureships ... at Corpus Christi, should be restored, and endowed with revenues from the College funds, sufficient to maintain two Professors; that at Magdalen ... six should be created, and endowed, for the maintenance of six Professors; that at Merton, two; at All Souls, four, or more, similar endowments should be made; to which might be added, if necessary, one at New College, and one at Queen’s. That these Colleges should be empowered to suppress, either for a time, or altogether, a sufficient number of their Fellowships, in order to provide for these endowments....

“That these Professor-Fellows should not be elected by the College electors; but that such Fellowships should follow the Professorships to which they may be respectively attached.”

To throw open Scholarships and Fellowships to general competition among the proficient of the University; and to appropriate a considerable amount of College property to the endowment of a Professorial body, such as shall supersede, in some degree, the College Tutors, — such is the design.

To the principle of University education which the Commissioners maintain — that it should be a combination of Professorial and Tutorial teaching; that Professors should, by lecturing, give and sustain broad and elevated views of their respective subjects; and that Tutors, in smaller classes, should examine, exercise, and discipline the students, — we

give our hearty assent ; and should uphold it as true for all times and places. It does, however, seem uncertain how far College classes, as at present constituted, will be a successful form of the second mode of instruction. Clever boys do not go all to one College, and stupid boys all to another. The Colleges are not arranged on the principle of proficiency, as are the classes in a school, and as all classes should be. Is it not desirable that "A, a proficient at Christ Church, should receive instruction, not with X and Y, *unproficients* also at Christ Church, but B, C, and D, *proficients* from Balliol?" While agreeing with Mr. Patteson in his preference, in general, of Tutorial discipline to Professorial deliveries, we cannot but also agree with Professor Vaughan, that, though Tutors should continue, as now, to be appointed in the Colleges, "it should be permitted to the undergraduate to select his own Tutor" in the College, "whose duty it would be to instruct him in his own particular subject, and to aid him in procuring instruction on other subjects, either in College or out of College. . . . It might be permitted to any Tutor so appointed to teach *any undergraduate*, of any College, who might wish to resort to him." Without this reciprocity, this *commercium*, it seems doubtful to us whether the system of College tuition can become as highly effective as it should be. Doubtless, the restrictions of locality, birth, &c., have hitherto been the great causes of inefficiency ; upon their removal some amelioration will undoubtedly follow ; yet it may be questioned whether words will not be occasionally used, similar to those we shall quote, relating to College tuition such as it has been.

"I shall never forget" — says Mr. Lowe, a distinguished member of the new administration in England, who, for some years, in Oxford, exercised the duties of a private tutor, taking, as he says, ten successive pupils in ten successive hours, day after day, and term after term, — "I shall never forget the distaste with which, coming from the top of a public school, I commenced construing, chapter by chapter, the twenty-first book of Livy. This had a bad effect upon the mind. A boy (for he is nothing more) finds the requisitions of College incomparably easier than those of school ; he becomes arrogant and conceited ; the Tutorial system has not only taught him nothing, but has actually given

him no idea of the course of study required for a high degree ; and, in the plenitude of ignorance and self-sufficiency, he wastes at least one most valuable year in idleness, if not in dissipation."

Mr. Lowe is entirely for private tuition, and is opposed to the continuance, in any shape, of the present College Tutorial System. And assuredly it is true, that a young man, coming up from the top, as he says, of a great public school, after studying some three years, perhaps, under the immediate eye of a ripe and distinguished scholar, does feel rather degraded when he finds himself seated, perhaps, by the side of some school-fellow whom he had only known as far below him in the school classes, to move slowly through some familiar classic. Assuredly, it is, or was, the natural course of the student, ambitious of distinction, to evade, as much as possible, most of his College lectures, and to acquaint himself with the true elevation of University studies, and practise himself for competition with the most formidable rival scholars, under the charge — unintermitted, if he can afford it — of an able private tutor. With him, he will read, in his first year, for the Latin University Scholarship ; in his second, for the Ireland ; in his third, for his Degree. So, at least, it used to be.

Let us, however, listen to another voice. "I went to Oxford," says a private narrative, to which we have access, "from the sixth form (the highest class) of a public school. I had at that time read all Thucydides, except the sixth and seventh books ; the six first books of Herodotus ; the early books of each author, I had done at least three times over. I had read five plays, I think, of Sophocles, four of Æschylus — several of these two or three times over ; four, perhaps, or five, of Euripides ; considerable portions of Aristophanes ; nearly all the Odyssey ; only about a third of the Iliad, but that several times over ; one or two dialogues of Plato — the Phædo, I remember, was one ; not quite all Virgil ; all Horace ; a good deal of Livy and Tacitus ; a considerable portion of Aristotle's Rhetoric, and two or three books of his Ethics ; besides, of course, other things. I mention these, because they have to do with Oxford. I had been used to do my very best in translating in the class. We were not marked ; but expressions of approbation, graduated carefully,

and invariably given by the rule so formed, were quite sure to let every boy know how he had done his part. The more diligent used to listen with eagerness for note and comment; the idlest amongst us were considerably afraid of reprimand. We were wont, moreover, to do three long original exercises singly, and marked by a regular scale. To fall below 26, 1 every week, out of school. These were looked over with us used to consider latterly a disgrace; to attain 28, a very great piece of honor. I knew perfectly well when I did ill, and when I did well.

“No words, not even those of Mr. Lowe, can express the amount of the change which I experienced on entering the lecture-rooms of my College—though confessedly one of the very best in Oxford—and on embarking upon the course of University study. Had I not read pretty nearly all the books? Was I to go on, keeping up my Latin prose writers, for three years more? Logic and Ethics had some little novelty; there was a little extra scholarship to be obtained in some of the College lectures. But that was the utmost. I should have wished to take to Mathematics, which I had hitherto rather neglected; but Mathematics alone would not lead to a Fellowship, and I did not feel any certainty that I could stand the strain of work for a “Double-First.” I had been pretty well sated of distinctions and competitions at school; I would gladly have dispensed with any thing more of success in this kind, always excepting the £200 a year of the Fellowship. What I wanted was to sit down to happy, unimpeded prosecution of some new subject or subjects; surely, there were more in the domain of knowledge, than that Latin and Greek which I had been wandering about in for the last ten years. Surely, there were other accomplishments to be mastered, besides the composition of Iambics and Ciceronian prose. If there were, however, they existed not for me. There were the daily lectures in the morning, which I did not like to miss, (and, indeed, could hardly have missed, to any profitable extent); nor yet, if I attended them, to neglect to prepare them. The daily lectures now, and the weary reëxamination in Classics three years ahead! An infinite lassitude and impatience, which I saw reflected in the faces of others, quickly began to infect



me. *Quousque* Latin prose? Though we should gain by it prizes and honors academical, beyond all academical example, it would not the less certainly be a mere shame and waste of strength to make the effort. I did go on, for duty's sake, and for discipline and docility, sadly doing Latin prose; but, except in docility, profiting but little. Could I only have hoped to get through the whole business in a year or a year and a half's time, and then to be free to do what, before that is over, one never does, *study*! Some pleasure, too, there would have been, even in that old Greek and Latin, could one but have been free to pasture freely, following a natural instinct, upon its fairly extensive field. But no; if one did any thing, one must "get up" the books for the Schools, and they were — three years ahead. Even the present alteration in the statute, by which the suffering pilgrim is allowed to lay down a portion of his classical burden at the feet of the examiners, at the end of the second year, appears to me insufficient; ever so much classics and theology still remain behind, to be carried on, as before, to the end of the third year. No proper emancipation, no true admission to the rights of manly reading, is given, until the moment when, for most, it comes too late.

"The masters of the public schools have, it is true, been in fault; they have pushed on their pupils too hastily; have prepared them prematurely for the ultimate honors of the degree; have neglected the *Æneid* and the *Iliad* for the sake of *Aristophanes* and the *Ethics*. Yet it is true, nevertheless, that this very examination in *Ethics*, &c., used to be passed, not so many years ago, by young men not a bit older than the boys at the top of the public schools. Arnold took his First at nineteen, Peel his "Double-First" at twenty. Surely, after the age of nineteen or twenty, it is really time that this school-boy love of racing, this empty competition, should be checked. There is less, a great deal, at Oxford than at Cambridge; but there is a great deal too much, at Oxford. For the preliminary discipline of boys, I grant it to be needful; to carry it forward into the very years of legal manhood, appears to me a most foolish and ill-advised innovation. The existing change I cannot account sufficient; every one, as before,

must do his *literæ humaniores*. Still, if four substantial departments were once really and fairly established for the third year, I am happy in the belief that no one would think so very much of high honors in any one of them. Examinations are useful things, and the stricter they are, the better; and the results, I suppose, can hardly be made public without some honor attending them. But by the great principle, "*divide et impera*," we shall, I hope, overpower much of this pernicious distinction. We shall be able to prove to young men whether they really know what they think they know, without declaring them, (*di meliora*!) to themselves and all the world, to be the cleverest men in Oxford. Examinations, I repeat, are essential; but no examinations will do much good unless there be, independent and irrespective of them, a real inward taste, and liking, and passion, shall I say, not for competitive effort and distinction, but for study, and the subjects themselves of study. Examinations are sadly apt to impair this spring of happy spontaneity: *honos*, indeed, *alibi artes*, but not that honor which attends the success of the race-horse; which testifies to a mere personal and comparative superiority. Far more grateful, and of far higher value than any such popular plaudit, is, to the faithful student, the strictly plain and severely true ascertainment, not of whom he has beat, but of what he has done: the real desideratum for him is the exact and well-considered verdict of an accomplished judge of details; to details and separate branches, therefore, — not to aggregates of studies, but to distinct studies, — should examinations be applied. *Quot homines, tot studia; quot studia, tot examinationes*: Have as many as you please; the more they are in number, the less imposing they are singly; multiply them indefinitely. Only, of all Senior Wranglers, Medallists, and even "Double-Firsts," let us be fairly and finally rid."

This extract may restore us to our general subject, — the studies of the University. The defects which we have observed in them, and of which we are here reminded, may be thus recapitulated.

1. The sameness and narrowness of their subjects, identical as they are with those already well taught at the public

schools, and alien to the direct purposes of any but the clerical profession.

2. The promiscuous admission of young men of all capacities and attainments ; and

3. Their indiscriminate union in the same College classes ; to which may be added,

4. The general inefficiency of College tuition, the need of extensive private tuition, and the absence of professorial teaching.

Over and above these evils, it is also alleged that the system of examinations, however useful in many respects, and however energetically carried out, has something of a pernicious effect. Oxford, and yet more, Cambridge, have been turned into mere arenas for the contests and the feats of the young competitors from the public schools. Examinations have been used, not for the legitimate purpose of proving and testing acquisitions in study, but as stimulants to exertion in general, and occasions for the display of intellectual *tours de force*. So far as the Universities have not been mere lounging-places, they have tended to become, during the last fifty years, intellectual race-courses and training-grounds.

The means which the Commissioners desire to see adopted for the improvement and modification of the system of public tuition, we have already explained at large. The discussion of the respective merits and the relations of collegiate, private, and professorial teaching, found in different portions of the evidence, in Mr. Patteson's, for example, Mr. Lowe's, Mr. Jowett's, and Professor Vaughan's, is one of the most instructive elements of the report. The professorial system, Mr. Jowett justly observes, has been adopted by foreign Universities, not from choice, but by necessity. The wealth of Oxford gives it the means of combining this with the tutorial ; and in such a combination, the whole experience of Oxford seems to show, consists the highest excellence of University teaching.

To exclude the idle and incompetent, who so fatally clog the action of any system of studies, the Commissioners simply direct the establishment of an University examination before admission. And, at this first University ordeal, honors, we think, might be legitimately and usefully given. To obviate

the sameness and narrowness complained of, in the subjects of study, evils which are fully acknowledged in the Report, something has already been done by the University itself; and an account of it has been given in this Review. The Commissioners carry the change yet further out, and offer the student, in his third year, a very considerable latitude of election in his subjects. After an examination at the end of his second year, he will be allowed to lay aside, if he chooses, his classics, and to devote himself to the school of theology; the school of mental philosophy; to oriental and modern European languages; to jurisprudence, history, and political economy; to mathematical, or to physical science. An examination in some one of these various subjects will test his proficiency at the close of the third year, and complete his qualification for his Bachelor's degree. This method, it is presumed, will also mitigate the evil effects considered to attach to a single final examination in an aggregate of subjects, and will discourage the student from exhausting his strength upon exertions for mere distinction; or vitiating his studies by habits of *cram*, mnemonic tricks, and the like dishonesties.

To exclude, by a severe entrance examination, the idlers and the dunces; to test the merits of the various preparatory schools by a classification of the pupils whom they send up; and to offer large pecuniary aid to diligent and promising students who require it,—such would be the object in the first stage. To complete the school studies under University tuition, and to test the result in a general examination, would be the next step. This once effected, the student would be left free, under the direction chiefly of Professors, to pursue, according to his taste or his views in life, any subject that he chose. His diligence and his success in this study of predilection would be approved in one more concluding, professorial examination. He would now, with his University title, be dismissed for actual service of life; but to any highly accomplished and proficient Bachelor of Arts, some wealthy College would be pretty certain to offer an income of 1000 dollars per annum, as a subsidy during his professional studies, or a premium to tempt him to service as a University teacher.

The entrance examination and the Scholarships; tutorial and professorial teaching; the completion of the school studies; and the commencement, with full freedom of choice, of the after-studies; the examinations testing both; and the Fellowships rewarding mature proficiency, — these items, in respect of studies, constitute the ideal presented in the Oxford Report. Such a system really bears the appearance of being for the nineteenth century, and, for the English race, as fair an ideal as can be reasonably expected; an ideal that may be kept in sight under social circumstances quite different from those of England. A University is not necessarily a finishing school for the sons of richer people; it may be a finishing school for those, whatever their parentage or private means, who are worth the pains and expense of a finished and complete education. If this country, in *her* public schools, possesses a means for discovering, in all parts and places, the most promising boys, is it not all the more incumbent upon her to give these chosen individuals that which, in other places is offered at random to a class, or section of society, — a really high culture, an education worthy of the name? It would be well, no doubt, could we really hope really to educate all; but time is wanting, if not money. We cannot have all our boys studying and learning till they are twenty years old. But are we, therefore, disabled from picking out for this benefit, not the richest, but the fittest; and giving them this benefit in its fullest measure? The American Republic does not appear to be wholly unfitted for the existence of institutions aiming at the highest ends, and using all the means, of the wealthiest and most learned European Universities. Might not a University exist upon this side of the Atlantic, which should combine, with the freedom and openness of the French and German institutions, the strict requirements and thorough-going discipline, and the munificent aids and rewards, which are found in those of England, or are, at any rate, aspired to in the Report of the Oxford Commission?